

**Town of Stratham
Town Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2008**

The ballot clerks were sworn in at 7:55 a.m. Present were Moderator David Emanuel, Assistant Moderator Jerry Howard, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Shirley Daley, Deputy Joyce Charbonneau, Town Administrator Paul Deschaine, Selectman Kirk Scamman, and Supervisors of the Checklist Susan Hunter, Caren Gallagher, and Carol Gulla. The ballot clerks were Annette Carter, Annmarie Peck, Vicky Avery, Pat Sapienza, Diana Thompson, and Roger Thompson. The afternoon ballot clerks, Florence Wiggin, Liz Chisholm, Natalie Perry, and Nancy Hunter, were sworn in at 2:00 p.m.

It was a slow voting day with only 599 total ballots cast. The results of the Town of Stratham voting are as follows:

Article #1: Election of Officers

Stratham Town and School Ballot:

Selectman for one year: Bruno Federico 438*
Selectman for two years: Timothy D. Copeland 438*
Selectman for three years: David Canada 512*
Town Treasurer for three years: Kevin J. Peck 497*
Town Clerk/Tax Collector for three years: Shirley S. Daley 513*
Town Moderator for two years: David Emanuel 523*
Supervisor of the Checklist for six years: Caren Gallagher 489*
Trustee of the Trust Funds for three years: Maria Emanuel 28* write in votes
Cemetery Committee for three years: Robert Cushman 489*
Library trustee for three years: Bruce Cotter 470*
Planning Board member for three years, vote for two:
Janet K. Johnson 428*, Mary Jane Werner 378*
Planning Board member for two years: Jeffrey R. Hyland 242*
Planning Board member for one year: Martin Wool 320*
Stratham School District School Board Member: vote for two:
Wendy Poutre 392*, Garry Giarrusso 403*

* Denotes winner of the election

The Exeter Region Cooperative School District Ballot results for Stratham voting only are as follows:

Cooperative School Board for East Kingston: David G. Miller 354
Cooperative School Board for Exeter: Katherine "Kate" Segal 360
Cooperative School Board for Stratham: Jennifer W. Maher 457
District Moderator: Charles F. Tucker 416
Cooperative District Budget Committee for Brentwood:
Elyse Gallo Seeley (term ending 2011) 330

Cooperative District Budget Committee for East Kingston:
David Pendell, Jr. (term ending 2009) 337
Cooperative District Budget Committee for Exeter:
Roy E. Morrisette (term ending 2009) 365
Cooperative District Budget Committee for Exeter:
Robert J. Aldrich (term ending 2010) 348
Cooperative District Budget Committee for Exeter:
Deborah Johnson (term ending 2011) 338
Cooperative District Budget Committee for Kensington:
Colleen Andreasse (term ending 2011) 329
Cooperative District Budget Committee for Newfields:
Simon Heslop (term ending 2010) 335
Cooperative District Budget Committee for Stratham:
Susan Canada (term ending 2009) 499
Cooperative District Budget Committee for Stratham:
Lucy Cushman (term ending 2010) 419

Article #1: Cooperative Budget: Yes 330, No 187
Article #2: Maintenance Fund: Yes 378, No 132
Article #3: Special Education Trust Fund: Yes 314 No 198
Article #4: Appropriate up to \$100,000.00 to the Special Education Trust Fund:
Yes 297, No 220
Article #5: Citizens Petition to not expend \$75,000.00 from the surplus trust fund to renovate at
the new Exeter High: Yes 285, No 218
Article #6: Independent audit: Yes 252, No 246

Stratham Town Ballot (continued):

Article #2: To update the Building Ordinance to the most recent international building codes:
Yes 420*, No 54

Article # 3: By Citizens petition from Mark Sykas and 82 other registered voters to rescind the
previous vote of the Town to elect planning board members and go back to an appointed board:
Yes 297*, No 253

The citizen petition to appoint the planning board has passed so the members elected to the
planning board will not apply and the Board of Selectmen will appoint a planning board.

The remaining Town of Stratham warrant article was voted on Friday, March 14, 2008 at the
Stratham Memorial School.

Town Moderator David Emanuel declared the meeting to come to order at 7:30 p.m. Lucy
Cushman led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. We observed a moment of silence for all of
those serving in the Armed Forces. Assistant Moderator Jerry Howard read the dedication of the
town report to Ken Lanzillo. David Emanuel read the results of the ballot voting on Tuesday,
March 11, 2008. David Emanuel explained the rules of the meeting and asked that only one
question at a time, and all questions to go through the Moderator.

Article #4 Town Budget: To raise such sums of money as may be necessary to defray general town charges for the ensuing year and make appropriations for the same. Selectman Martin Wool moved to raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,923,240.00 to defray general town charges for the ensuing year. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. Martin went through the budget and explained the items, which went up and down. Overall, the entire town budget is up 1.8% over last year. David Emanuel asked if there were any questions and being none, the vote was taken in the affirmative and the budget passed.

Article #5 Capital Improvement Program: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Nine hundred Nine Thousand dollars and no cents (\$909,000.00) to implement the Capital Improvements Program for 2008 as presented in the Town Report and approved by the Planning Board. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years for this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI).

Selectman David Short moved to accept the article as read and Selectman Kirk Scamman seconded the motion. David Short explained the article line by line then asked for questions from the people. Robert Goodrich from Portsmouth Avenue complimented the board on the advertising of the town meeting; he also questioned why there was not money put aside this year for the purchase of cemetery land. He stated it would be better to put it aside each year and not one big sum which is projected for 2013. David Short explained at this time we do not have any land available for purchase and the cemetery committee is looking into a cremation garden to save some of the space we now have. Robert Goodrich asked if he could make a motion to add \$50,000.00 each year. It was explained that could not be done tonight but it could go before the planning board for the future. Michael Perfit from 182 Winnicutt questioned the department service and if it should have been part of the budget. Paul Deschaine, Town Administrator, explained the interest was in the budget and the principal was in the CIP. David Emanuel asked if there were any other questions and being none, the vote was taken in the affirmative and the article passed.

Article #6: Purchase of a new fire truck: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$500,000.00) for the purpose of purchasing and equipping a new fire truck for the use of the Stratham Volunteer Fire Department, and to authorize the Selectmen as agents to withdraw up to Three Hundred Twenty Thousand dollars and no cents (\$320,000.00) from the Capital Reserve Fund created for these purposes during the March 13, 1998 Annual Town Meeting, and to further authorize the withdrawal of up to One hundred Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$100,000.00) from the Stratham Fire Department EMS Fund created for these purposes during the March 17, 2000 Annual Town Meeting and as amended during the March 11, 2005 Town Meeting. Furthermore, the balance of up to Eighty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$80,000.00) is authorized to be accepted and expended by the Selectmen on behalf of the Town as a donation for these purposes for the Stratham Volunteer Fire Department Association. This is a special warrant article, which will be non-lapsing until these purposes are accomplished but shall in no case be later than (5) five years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI). No additional funds from the general taxation are to be used.

Selectman David Canada made the motion to accept the article as read and seconded by Selectman Bruno Federico. David Canada took a minute to answer a letter, which had been in

the newspaper regarding a fire call at 2:31 am. He explained that within the first three minutes, two Stratham responders had arrived and within fifteen minutes, three Stratham trucks and fourteen responders were there with Exeter, all were in a timely manner.

David Canada explained the equipment needs, and that a truck is not replaced just because of the age, the truck is still functional but the manufacturer is no longer in business and it is hard to get parts, etc. for the truck. Stan Walker, Assistant Fire Chief, explained that the reliability of the equipment and the pump is very important, and it needs to be certified each year. Bob Goodrich asked what type of truck they had in mind. Stan Walker explained they were looking at three different manufacturers at this time. They would like to find one that put the entire truck together. Joyce Phoenix asked who did the maintenance on the equipment. Stan explained they would contract it out to several different companies. Joyce Phoenix asked if it could be kept locally. Stan Walker explained no one in the state is able to do it. Martin Wool explained the old truck has an open back seat and safety is a problem, it's more than 20 years old and it has some rust, and with the company out of business, it's very hard to maintain. Bob Mitchell asked if it was necessary for the town to own two engines. He stated the town is part of mutual aid and every town has at least one engine. He questioned if it is necessary to have as many engines in the area. Stan Walker explained if there is a disaster, each town would be using their own, and several times both engines have been out in Stratham at the same time on two different calls. Roy Bunting from 4 Crocketts Way asked if we needed to replace the pump. Martin Wool said the pump was weak. Roy Bunting asked if we could just replace the pump and not the entire truck. David Emanuel explained the pump was not the only problem. John Sapienza explained there had been an electrical problem and no one could fix the junction box and parts were not available, so he and Stan Walker had to bypass the junction box. John also explained they had gone on a mutual aid call in Hampton in a blizzard and the three firefighters in the back of the truck froze and had to be physically helped out of the engine. Bruce Scamman from Greta's Way spoke in favor of the truck. Madorie Kobayashi from Hersey Lane reminded everyone we were not adding a truck but replacing one and we would sell or trade the old one. Martin Wool explained that in most cases the vehicle would go out to bid. Sue Bourn asked who would make the final decision on which truck to purchase, and to make sure the manufacturer will still be in business in 15 years. Stan Walker explained there would be a committee to make the decision. Murray Segal asked if it would be going out to bid. David Emanuel explained they would look at several vehicles and get proposals from them and decide. It would be purchased from a dealer. David Moriarty, Winnicutt Road stated the town was getting a snow job and parts could be found if they looked for them. Allen Choiniere explained the replacement schedule of all the equipment the Fire Department has. Nate Merrill stated the budget committee supported the article. Martin Wool asked to move the question. David Emanuel read the question and the vote was taken in the affirmative and the article passed.

Article #7: Solar/Wind Power Property Tax Exemption: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of NH RSA 72:61 through RSA 72:68 inclusively, which provide for an optional property tax exemption for the assessed value, for property tax purposes, for persons owning real property, which is equipped with solar and/or wind-powered energy systems intended for use at the immediate site.

Selectman Kirk Scamman made the motion to accept the article and Selectman Martin Wool seconded. Kirk explained that several townspeople asked the Board to consider this article. Selectman Bruno Federico made a motion to amend this article to read:

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of NH RSA 72:61 through RSA 72:68 inclusively, which provide for an optional property tax exemption for the assessed value, for property tax purposes, for persons owning real property, which is equipped with solar and/or wind-powered energy systems intended for use at the immediate site. Such property tax exemption shall be in the amount equal to 100% of the assessed value of qualifying equipment under these statutes up to a maximum of \$20,000.00 as a starting point for the maximum amount of the exemption.

Selectman David Short seconded the amendment. Bruno Federico spoke to the amendment, stating the NH Department of Revenue Administration would have disallowed the article as originally written because it did not state how the exemption amount would be determined. This amendment meets their approval. The Board of Selectmen wanted to use \$20,000.00 as a starting point for the maximum amount for the exemption. If it proves to be a disincentive, it can be changed at a later date. Bob Mitchell asked what all the RSA's meant. Town Administrator Paul Deschaine explained they were the RSA's which defined what a solar energy system was and how to approve it, and wind power systems, and how to approve it, etc. Joyce Phoenix asked if the exemption went with the person or the property. Bruno Federico explained it stayed with the property. Robert Goodrich asked why they did not include thermal heat. Kirk Scamman said the RSA only deals with solar and wind. Janice Wayne asked what the neighbors could expect from a windmill. Kirk Scamman explained anyone applying would have to go to the Planning Board for approval and follow the regulations. David Short asked if we could move the question on the amendment. David Emanuel read the amendment, and the vote was taken and the amendment passed.

Murray Segal stated the exemption could be unfair because if anyone with a furnace needed to replace it they would get no tax exemption. Lyndy Burnham stated the utility asked to sell the excess back to them and people could make money on this. Bruno Federico stated the utility will only buy back what you use so the owner will not make money on this. Martin Wool explained a system would cost more than the \$20,000.00 exemption and this was designed to give a little incentive for alternative energy. Lisa Portelli from Tansy Avenue thanked the Board for looking into this. There being no other questions, David Emanuel read the article as amended and the vote was taken in the affirmative and the article passed.

Article # 8: To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting: The chair recognized Martin Wool. Martin thanked the citizens for the new state-of-the-art Police Department and the new state-of-the-art Fire House. He announced the open house for the Fire Department tomorrow, March 15, from 12:00-4:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to come down and have a tour of the firehouse, and enjoy lunch that the Ladies Auxiliary will provide. The Office of Emergency Management is also located in the Fire Station. Furniture in that area will be coming; they are waiting for grants to come through. Martin also thanked the Highway Department for all their hard work this winter. When spring gets here, they will also be working on smoothing the roads. Martin also thanked the Energy Committee; they have been working on a solar system on the roof of the Fire Station. The Fire Station was completed on time and under budget and Martin wished to thank everyone that was responsible for that. The retiring Board members, Martin Wool, Kirk Scamman, and David Short wished to thank everyone for their support over the years. All of their time together in the Selectmen's office added up to over 45

years of experience. Martin also added that the town is always looking for residents to volunteer on the various boards, such as conservation, recreation, planning, etc. If anyone is interested, please submit an application to the Board of Selectmen and it will be reviewed, and if a good fit, you will be appointed. Martin also mentioned that the Public Works Committee is hard at work on the water situation in town, i.e. where the water is and how much is available. Martin also wanted to say that Fire Chief Bob Law is in the hospital, and we all wish him a speedy recovery. Martin also thanked everyone again for the opportunity to serve the citizens of the Town since his first election to the board in 1979.

Bruno Federico and Dave Canada welcomed Tim Copeland to the Board. Dave Canada presented gifts to the following for their service to the town: Kirk Scamman, Martin Wool, and David Short. Dave Canada also presented a gift to Lucy Cushman, who had served on the Exeter Cooperative Board and the Stratham Memorial Board. She served a combined total of 14 years of service on these boards.

Dave Canada made some announcements on behalf of Pat Elwell, chairperson of the Conservation Commission who could not be there tonight. The Conservation Commission is holding their annual compost bin drive. The form is available at the Town Office. The cost is \$40.00 and you can order until 4/1 and pick up is 4/19 at the municipal parking lot. The Conservation Commission is holding its annual clean up day the morning of 4/19. Show up at 9:00 a.m. at Stratham Hill Park, and you will be given an assigned area, and it will be followed by a free barbecue at noon. The Conservation Commission has also obtained septic system filing folders, and they are available for the residents. They are good for a place to keep your records, and they also have some helpful tips on how to maintain your system.

Other business before the town:

John Sapienza Raeder Dr. thanked everyone on the behalf of the Fire Department for their new fire station and fire truck.

Joe Derwiecki, Stratham Green thanked Martin Wool for all his years of service to the town.

Dave Emanuel told everyone that Town Clerk Shirley Daley would like to swear in all town officials to their new appointments at the end of Town Meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Daley, Town Clerk and
Joyce Charbonneau, Deputy Town Clerk